



BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

477 H STREET NORTHWEST • WASHINGTON DC 20001-2694 • (202) 371-8880

March 23, 2004

Dear Representative:

The Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) urges you to oppose the FY2005 Budget Resolution. Despite an increase over the President's Budget Request released in February, the budget resolution does not provide adequate funding to meet the needs of sick and disabled veterans seeking care from the system. The proposal is an insult not only to current veterans who served their country honorable, but also to the men and women at this moment all over the world protecting democracy. BVA questions the priorities of this Congress.

BVA is the only Congressionally chartered veterans service organization exclusively dedicated to serving the needs of our Nation's blinded veterans and their families. Currently, over 2,500 blinded veterans await entrance into one of ten VA Blind Rehabilitation Centers across the country. Most Centers are currently operating at reduced staff levels. Without a substantial increase in funding, this waiting list will continue to grow.

BVA endorses *The Independent Budget*, a comprehensive budget policy document co-authored by PVA, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, which recommends \$29.8 billion for funding for veterans' health care for FY 2005. This funding request tracks the real needs of the VA to provide quality health care in a timely manner to all veterans enrolled in the system.

If you truly support our men and women in uniform, and are concerned about defending this great Nation, you will vote against this budget resolution. Defeating the current proposal is the patriotic action to take.

Sincerely,

/s/

Thomas H. Miller
Executive Director